

MEMORANDUM

February 14, 1963

To: Dr. Lederberg  
From: Elliott Levinthal  
Subject: Industrial associates of the Instrumentation Research Laboratory

Under our NASA facilities grant we are asked to stimulate an interaction with industry. This could be a worthwhile endeavor from our point of view also. There are some instrumentation or equipment development requirements of our own and of various departments that cannot be served by the Instrumentation Research Laboratory. This is either because we do not have the specific skills required or the available time, in spite of our interest in the problem. There will undoubtedly be an increasing number of such projects.

It would be desirable to find a mechanism for using the engineering services of some of the larger companies in this area. The cost of custom engineering services is generally prohibitive unless the company involved has some special commercial interest in the end result.

A few of the larger aerospace companies have expressed a specific interest in medical instrumentation, in addition to whatever interests they have in connection with the biological aspects of their space programs. Among these are Lockheed, Hughes Aircraft and Litton. In addition, companies such as Hewlett-Packard and Beckman have well established divisions in this field, and others such as Ampex and Varian have related interests.

It would be attractive to companies such as the above to have a "window" into the activities of the Medical School. To a degree, the Instrumentation Research Laboratory could provide a mechanism for achieving this. What is proposed is that these companies be approached concerning their interest in making a sizable contribution of goods and services to carry out instrumentation or equipment development projects for our laboratory. The Instrumentation Research Laboratory would define the specifications, select the most appropriate company and maintain the necessary technical communication to insure the successful completion of the projects. In some cases part of the cost might be defrayed by specific grants from other sources (i.e., NIH, NSF, etc.)

The benefits to the companies involved could remain essentially intangible. Nothing need or should prevent free scientific publication of any of the research results and techniques. It is likely, however, that the companies would want to reserve any patent benefits resulting from their own developments. It might be desirable to conduct an annual conference for these industrial associates in a way similar to the functioning of SRI and their associates and Material Sciences and theirs.

*Levinthal*

I would like to implement such a program by seeking gifts of \$50,000 or more in goods and services. It is hoped that the amount would be renewed after being depleted by a project. The amount needs to be at least this large to cover the cost of most any single project of sufficient interest to justify the effort. The mechanism of implementation would be through L. Cook and K. Cuthbertson, both to relate to the PACE program and to frame a specific form of a proposal that could be presented to the companies.